opposite conductivity types with at least one of the two regions extending to the insulating layer; and

a contact pin connected to the electronic component and connected through the Zener diodes to ground in order to divert an electrostatic discharge and thereby protect the electronic component.

12. (Amended) Device according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of Zener diodes are mounted in series and connected to the contact pin.

B' (Cont'd)

13. (Amended) Device according to claim 11, wherein the two regions of heavy doped opposite conductivity types are separated by a region doped to an average level according to either of the opposite conductivity types.

14. (Amended) Device according to claim 13, wherein the semiconducting layer comprises a silicon layer, the two regions of heavy doped opposite conductivity types comprise doping of the order of 10^{20} atoms/cm^3, and the region doped to an average level comprises doping of the order of 10^{18} atoms/cm^3.

15. (Amended) Device according to claim 11, wherein the substrate is a silicon-on-insulator SOI substrate.

16. (Amended) Device according to claim 12, wherein the plurality of the Zener diodes is laid out adjacent to each other to form a series installation, and an electrical link between two adjacent Zener diodes is obtained by a metallization.

17. (Amended) Device according to claim 12, wherein the plurality of the Zener diodes are laid out adjacent to each other to form a series installation, and an electrical link between two adjacent Zener diodes is obtained by a silicide.